

Part C State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005 -2010

Overview of the State Performance Plan Development:

The Lead Agency solicited public input from a broad group of Stakeholders including parents, service providers, program directors and agency representatives to develop a plan for administration and dissemination of the Family Survey. The Stakeholders group met on December 12, 2006 and January 2, 2007 to review implementation of the NCSEAM Family Survey, identify survey questions relevant to the Massachusetts EI system, discuss distribution and survey return strategies, and determine measurable and rigorous targets for the state's performance on this indicator.

(The following items are to be completed for each monitoring priority/indicator.)

Monitoring Priority: Early Intervention Services In Natural Environments

Indicator 4: Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:

- A. Know their rights;**
- B. Effectively communicate their children's needs; and**
- C. Help their children develop and learn.**

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A) and 1442)

Measurement:

- A. Percent = [(# of respondent families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family know their rights) divided by the (# of respondent families participating in Part C)] times 100.
- B. Percent = [(# of respondent families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family effectively communicate their children's needs) divided by the (# of respondent families participating in Part C)] times 100.
- C. Percent = [(# of respondent families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family help their children develop and learn) divided by the (# of respondent families participating in Part C)] times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

As noted in the State Performance Plan, the Lead Agency participated with NCSEAM in the Family Survey pilot, and utilized the NCSEAM Family Survey to establish baseline data to be submitted in the February 2007 APR. The following is a description of the Massachusetts Sampling Plan to capture baseline data for this indicator.

Massachusetts Family Survey Sampling Plan and Methodology

Background:

The sampling plan developed to measure Indicator 4 of the SPP, *"Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family: to a) know their rights, b) effectively communicate their children's needs; and c) help their children develop and learn"*, was based on factors of the Massachusetts system. These factors included:

1. The size of the Massachusetts Part C system which serves approximately 30,000 children annually,
2. The number of children served at any one point in time (approximated at 14,000 children), and
3. A determination of the best time to survey families during their EI experience to seek feedback from families.

Massachusetts participated in the NCSEAM Family Survey pilot. In return for serving as a pilot state, Massachusetts received 1000 free scannable surveys and analysis of returned surveys. Because this resource was limited to 1000 surveys in relation to the numbers of children served, it was determined that a sampling plan utilizing NCSEAM as a resource would be the method for collecting baseline data for the February '07 APR submission.

Collection and Review of Available Data:

In preparation for the development of the sampling plan, the MA DPH assembled the following data from the EIIS:

Total number of children enrolled in EI as of Dec. 1, 2005 by age group:

- 0 -1
- 1 -2
- 2 -3

This data was further analyzed by state geographic regions using three filters:

- Ethnicity
- Race
- Primary language spoken at home

Methodology and Implementation:

Technical assistance reviews from Dr. Lisa Persinger at NCSEAM, NECTAC staff, and DPH statisticians substantiated that a valid sample could be achieved by sending surveys to all 61 certified Massachusetts early intervention programs.

MA DPH moved forward toward implementation of the sampling plan by:

- Collecting and analyzing transition and discharge data from the EIIS system for a comparable time frame in 2005,
- Establishing distribution criteria that identified families whose children had been enrolled in EI for a minimum of six months and were transitioning out of EI between September 22 and October 27, 2006, for any reason, including turning three, no longer eligible, moving or family choice as those who would receive a survey.
- Determining each of the 61 certified programs would be sent a number of surveys consistent with the discharge rate of children and families in September and October 2005.
- Responding to the second most common language in the home of eligible children, Spanish, (source: MDPH EIIS system) by utilizing the NCSEAM survey translated in Spanish by the Iowa Part C system.

Each early intervention program was sent packets of materials which included cover letters of explanation in both English and Spanish, LSU IRB letter, surveys, stamped, self addressed envelopes and pencils. Programs were asked to have Service Coordinators hand deliver materials to families who met the above referenced criteria.

After packets were distributed to the EI programs, a PowerPoint presentation was sent in advance of a conference call to provide additional background and explanation. Representatives from 18 programs and vendor agencies joined the call. The conference call generated several questions. The lead agency provided

SPP Template – Part C (3)

Massachusetts

response to the participants during the call and subsequently developed an FAQ which was distributed electronically to all early intervention providers in addition to being posted on the Department of Public Health and Early Intervention Parent Leadership (EIPLP) websites. Early Intervention providers offered very positive feedback about the dissemination and distribution process.

OSEP reviewed the Massachusetts Sampling Plan stating that the sampling plan should be able to provide valid and reliable statewide data given that all 61 EI programs will be distributing the survey. There was some concern that the 37 day time period for distribution of the surveys may not yield enough returned surveys to make it valid. The Massachusetts EI system has about 16,000 children exit the system in a year, which is approximately 1,350 a month (30,000 served annually but 14,000 served at any point in time). At 95% confidence with an interval of 5 you would need 299 returned surveys to report State data which seems feasible. However, if there are 61 EI programs that means they are receiving very few if any from some programs (299 divided by 61 = approx 5 per program), this may lead to issues for local level reporting.

It is the states intent to establish statewide baseline data to be submitted in the February 2007 APR. The Lead Agency will be following up with a much more extensive survey distribution plan in the upcoming year to enable us to draw inferences on a local level. The DPH will continue to investigate available internal resources as well as engage input from Stakeholders regarding systemic implementation and distribution for the February 2008 APR.

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Statistical Summary STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

PART C Early Intervention Family Survey Report For Data Collected in 2006

SPP/APR Indicator #4a: Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:
A. Know their rights.

Standard: A .95 likelihood of a response of “agree,” “strongly agree” or “very strongly agree” with this item on the NCSEAM survey’s Impact of EI Services on Your Family scale:
“Over the past year, Early Intervention services have helped me and/or my family: know about my child’s and family’s rights concerning Early Intervention services.”

Percent at or above indicator 4A standard (539):	80%	(SE of the mean = 2.3%)
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SPP/APR Indicator #4b: Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:
B. Effectively communicate their children’s needs.

Standard: A .95 likelihood of a response of “agree,” “strongly agree” or “very strongly agree” with this item on the NCSEAM survey’s Impact of EI Services on Your Family scale:
“Over the past year, Early Intervention services have helped me and/or my family: communicate more effectively with the people who work with my child and family.”

Percent at or above indicator 4B standard (556):	77%	(SE of the mean = 2.5%)
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SPP/APR Indicator #4c: Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:
C. Help their children develop and learn.

Standard: A .95 likelihood of a response of “agree,” “strongly agree” or “very strongly agree” with this item on the NCSEAM survey’s Impact of EI Services on Your Family scale:

“Over the past year, Early Intervention services have helped me and/or my family: understand my child’s special needs.”

Percent at or above indicator 4C standard (516):	86%	(SE of the mean = 2.1%)
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Number of Valid Responses:	290	Mean Measure:	700
Measurement reliability: 0.90		Measurement SD:	183

Averages of 8 U.S. states’ 1,750 families participating in the 2005 NCSEAM Pilot Study:

Indicator	A	B	C	SE of Mean	Mean Measure	SD
Value	74%	70%	84%	0.9% - 1.1%	644	158

Discussion of Baseline Data:**Results Summary**

An electronic data file containing the results of 292 family surveys was provided to Avatar International, Inc. by the State of Massachusetts for measurement scaling and statistical analysis. The data meet or exceed the NCSEAM pilot study's standards for internal consistency, completeness, and overall quality. Of the 292 responding families, 290 provided responses to the survey's Impact of EI Services on Families rating scale items. These cases provide the raw material for this report.

The percents reported to OSEP for SPP/APR indicators 4a, 4b, and 4c are calculated as the percent of families whose measures are at or above a standard that is specific to each indicator. In these analyses, the standards applied were the standards recommended by a nationally representative stakeholder group convened by NCSEAM. This group identified items that most closely represented the content of each of the indicators and recommended the level of agreement that should be required on these items. For indicators 4a, 4b, and 4c, the recommended standards were operationalized as measures of 539, 556, and 516, respectively, since these are the calibrations of the items most closely related to the indicators. The percent reported to OSEP for each indicator is the percent of families with measures on the Impact of Early Intervention Services on Families scale that are at or above these levels.

Figure 1 below shows the distribution of measures on the Impact on Families scale for all families whose data were submitted for this analysis. The overall average of all the individual family measures is 700. In Figure 1, imagine that vertical lines have been drawn at 539, 556, and 516 on the x-axis. These lines would divide the measures above these standards from those below, and would illustrate that the percentages of responding Massachusetts Part C families with measures at or above these levels are 80%, 77%, and 86%, respectively, as shown in the previous page's summary statistics.

There is always a certain amount of error in estimating a value for the entire population of families in a state, based on data from a sample of families. Given the size of the population of families receiving early intervention services, and the number of families from whom completed surveys were received, there is a 95% likelihood that the true value of these percentages is as much as 2.5% less or more than the values given, depending on the standard error of the mean for each indicator (reported on the Statistical Summary page).

Data Volume and Quality

The Massachusetts data from the Impact of EI Services on Families scale meet or exceed the NCSEAM 2005 National Item Validation Study's standards for the internal consistency, completeness, and overall quality expected from this survey. Massachusetts families responded on average to about 20 of the 22 questions on this scale. Measurement reliability ranges from .90-.95, depending on how error is estimated, meaning that the measures fall in four to five statistically distinct ranges. Overall data consistency is acceptable, as indicated by several different model fit statistics.

Massachusetts's data from the Quality of Family-Centered EI Services scale also meet or exceed the NCSEAM 2005 National Item Validation Study's standards for the internal consistency, completeness, and overall quality. Families responded on average to about 22 of the 24 items on this scale. Measurement reliability ranges from .80-.90, depending on how error is estimated, meaning that the measures fall in three to four statistically distinct ranges. Overall data consistency is acceptable, as indicated by several different model fit statistics.

Source: William P. Fisher, Jr., PH.D, Avatar International Inc. Orlando Corporate Research Center.

Massachusetts 2006 Part C Impact on Family Measures

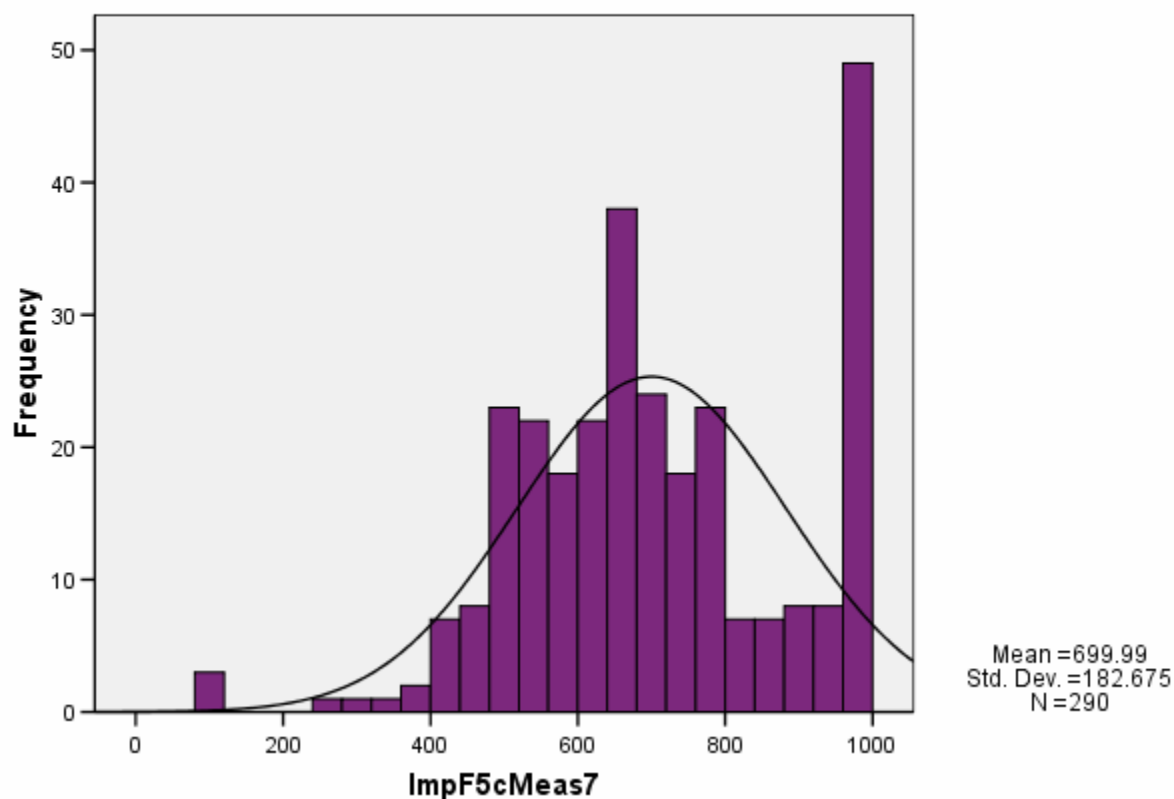


Figure 1. Distribution of Massachusetts Part C Impact on Family Measures, 2006

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 (2005-2006)	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>80% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>77% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>86% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>

<p>2006 (2006-2007)</p>	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>81% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>78% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>87% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>
<p>2007 (2007-2008)</p>	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>70% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>70% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>85% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>
<p>2008 (2008-2009)</p>	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>71% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>71% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>86% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>
<p>2009 (2009-2010)</p>	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>72% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>72% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>87% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>
<p>2010 (2010-2011)</p>	<p>Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:</p> <p>73% - of families participating in Part C know their rights</p> <p>73% - of families participating in Part C effectively communicate their children's needs</p> <p>88% - of families participating in Part C help their children develop and learn</p>

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

The Stakeholders engaged in a review of NCSEAM Family Survey, following the guidelines for “Item Shopping” to modify the survey for the Massachusetts system. The Lead Agency then solicited estimates for contracting out the Family Survey modification, production, dissemination, data entry, analysis and disaggregation. The Lead Agency also gathered additional data from the EIS system regarding the number of Annual IFSPs meeting held throughout the year.

In the Massachusetts EI system there are approximately 7400 Annual IFSP meetings per year. In developing a consistent approach to survey dissemination, the Stakeholders determined that the time of distribution for the Family Survey will be at the child and family’s Annual IFSP meeting. This will be operationalized at the program level and will allow families to be able to ask questions to providers regarding any issues or concerns that are addressed in the Family Survey. It will also enable the state to maximize the data collected on the local EIPs to help them better meet the needs of families enrolled in their programs.

The Lead Agency will contract with Piedra Data Services to complete the Family Survey modifications, production, dissemination, data entry, analysis and disaggregation. All 61 EIPs will receive a packet from Piedra Data Services on or around July 1, 2007 to start distribution of the NCSEAM Family Survey to families by the Service Coordinators at the Annual IFSP meeting. Given that the DPH received almost a 30% return rate on surveys during the pilot period, Service Coordinators will continue to be an integral part of the dissemination plan. Surveys will be available in English and Spanish. EIPs will identify a point person at the program level to assist families in identifying appropriate agency or community resources for language capacity to assist in the completion the survey. All surveys will be returned directly to Piedra Data Services for analysis, state wide data reporting and local program level reports.

Setting a measurable and rigorous target for the state’s performance on these indicators involved reviewing the current baseline data and determining what amount of change indicates real and meaningful improvement by Stakeholders. The state’s ultimate goal is for 100% targets in this indicator, and is committed to continue to offer education to families regarding their Family Rights, how they can effectively communicate their children’s needs and help their children develop and learn to improve services and results for children with disabilities. Stakeholders believe that a 5% increase over the next five years of the SPP would represent a meaningful improvement on this indicator.

The state, through its Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP), staffed by family members whose children have received services in the Massachusetts Early Intervention system, will develop and implement skill building opportunities for families to meet and review their understanding of Early Intervention, their rights, responsibilities and expectations. This Parent to Parent interaction and support will grow family involvement in the system. In addition, sessions on Family Rights will be presented at the annual Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium Conference. Family members will be supported to attend this conference by the Lead Agency. Over the next year, the state will translate the Family Survey into two additional languages that represent the third and fourth most common languages of families utilizing Early Intervention services. Outreach materials educating families about Early Intervention will be developed and disseminated in these languages.

The Lead Agency will publicly report local program data on Indicator # 4 in 2008 on the Lead Agency website. Local program reports will be disseminated to each Early Intervention Program highlighting Program Performance on the percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family: know their rights, effectively communicate their children’s needs and help their children develop and learn. Program performance will be compared to the state target, the difference between program performance and state target and the EIPs performance compared to similar program grouping.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for FFY 2007:

The Lead Agency may have been premature in setting targets last year on such a small sample of

respondents not large enough to reflect the current EI population in the state. Based on Stakeholder input from the January 10, 2008 ICC meeting the Lead Agency will consider this FFY 2006 data as baseline data for setting targets for FFY 2007 as follows:

Percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family:

70% - Know their rights

70% - Effectively communicate their children's needs

85% - Help their children develop and learn

The Lead Agency has revised its Measurable and Rigorous Target in the Massachusetts Part C State Performance Plan for 2005 – 2010 to reflect improvement over the FFY 2006 revised baseline data. See pages 21 -22.

Improvement Activities:

The lead agency will develop and offer Family Rights and Due Process training opportunities to families and professionals in a variety of modalities (face to face, flash videos, DVD's, etc.) Information helping families to more effectively participate in and understand the language of their IFSP is being developed and will be disseminated. An initiative to increase the number of parent contacts, volunteer parents and EI programs is underway. The parent contacts serve as a conduit of information between the Lead Agency and their EI program. Parent contacts share information with families and support them in offering their thoughts, needs and opinion to their programs and the Lead Agency. In FFY07 there will be a focus on understanding family rights and ways of communication children's needs. With support from the ICC, information about the Family Survey and its three components will go out to the larger provider community. This increased knowledge will support families to participate even more broadly within the IFSP process and will serve as another source of information about the three critical components measured by the Family Survey. The Lead Agency will continue to review and adjust its targets as appropriate.

Timeline: 2008 -2009

Resource: Lead Agency Staff to include the Director of Office of Family Initiatives, PLP Training Coordinator, Director of Office of Family Rights and Due Process, Assistant Director of Early Childhood Programs

The Lead Agency will continue its improvement and/or maintenance activities that extend to 2010.